Claims

1. An animal electronic data collecting device comprising: a radio transmitter and receiver, a processor for controlling operation of the device and memory for storing information including a first identifier associated with the device, wherein the processor is arranged to transmit a signal, by means of the radio transmitter, and to receive, by means of the radio receiver, one or more signals, each representing a second identifier from other devices and the processor is arranged to store in the memory each second identifier, and

wherein the default operating condition of the device is for the radio receiver to be in a receive condition and, on receipt of a wakeup call, the processor is arranged to place the radio transmitter into a transmit condition.

2. A device as claimed in claim 1 further arranged to periodically place the radio transmitter into a transmit condition and to transmit the first identifier.

3. A device as claimed in claim 2 wherein the time interval between periodic transmission is a function of the time since the last receipt of a second identifier.

4. A device as claimed in claim 1 wherein, on receipt of a wakeup call, the processor is arranged to place the radio transmitter into a transmit condition when the wakeup call includes a second identifier that is not already stored in the memory of the device .

5. A device as claimed in any of claims 1 to 4 wherein the device is further arranged to send data from its memory to a remote device in response to a specific request from the said remote device.

6. A device as claimed in any of claims 1 to 5 wherein the device is arranged to store a received second identifier in a first part of the memory and to store the said received identifier in a second part of the memory at a time determined by the time elapsed since the receipt of the second identifier

7. A device as claimed in claim 6 wherein the device is further arranged to send data from the first and/or second part of its memory to a remote device in response to a specific request from the said remote device.

8. A method of gathering data on animals and animal products, the method comprising;

receiving at the device one or more signals, each representing a second identifier from other devices

storing in memory a received second identifier,

transmitting a signal from the device including a first identifier associated with the device.

wherein the default operating condition of the device is for the device to be in a condition to receive signals and, on receipt of a wakeup call, the device is placed into a condition to transmit signals.

9. A method as claimed in claim 8 further arranged to periodically place the radio transmitter into a transmit condition and to transmit the first identifier.

10. A method as claimed in claim 9 wherein the time interval between periodic transmission is a function of the time since the last receipt of a second identifier.

11. A method as claimed in claim 8 wherein, on receipt of a wakeup call, the device is placed into a condition to transmit signals when the wakeup call includes a second identifier that is not already stored in the memory of the device.

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12. A method as claimed in any of claims 8 to 11 further comprising sending data from the memory to a remote device in response to a specific request from the said remote device.

10 13. A method as claimed in any of claims 8 to 12 further comprising storing a received second identifier in a first part of the memory and storing the said received identifier in a second part of the memory at a time determined by the time elapsed since the receipt of the second identifier

15 14. A method as claimed in claim 13 further comprising sending data from the first and/or second part of the memory to a remove device in response to a specific request from the said remote device.